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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 TRSE-00
HA-05 IO-13 /086 W
----------050429 031956Z /73
R 021315Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1002
INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USDIA
USCINCSO J-2 QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 4273

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BL
SUBJECT: LA PAZ UNIVERSITY REOPENS, BIDS SAYONARA TO SAHONERO

REF: (A) LA PAZ 3416 (B) LA PAZ 3600

1. SUMMARY: UNIVERSITY OF LA PAZ WAS QUIETLY REOPENED BY GOB MAY 30. REOPENING FOLLOWED AGREEMENT AMONG GOB, FACULTY AND STUDENTS WHICH REPLACES GOB APPOINTED UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS WITH SENIOR UNIVERSITY DEANS UNTIL ELECTION FOR NEW UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS CAN BE HELD. UNIVERSITY IS NOW EXPECTED TO REMAIN RELATIVELY QUIET THROUGH THE JULY 9 ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. UNIVERSITY OF SAN ANDRES IN LA PAZ, WHICH HAD BEEN CLSED BY GOB ON APRIL 28 (REF A), WAS PEACEFULLY REOPENED MAY 30, TWO DAYS EARLIER THAN PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED (REF B). THE REOPENING FOLLOWED AGREEMENT REACHED AMONG THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (CNES) (THE GOB APPOINTED UNIVERSITY GOVERNING BOARD), FACULTY AND STUDENTS WHICH ACCEPTS THE PRINCIPLE STUDENT DEMAND THAT THE GOB APPOINTED
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UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS, HEADED BY RECTOR ROLANDO SAHONERO, BE REPLACED BY POPULARLY ELECTED OFFICIALS. UNTIL ELECTIONS CAN BE ARRANGED, PROBABLY IN LATE JUNE OR EARLY JULY, FORMER RECTOR ROLANDO SAHONERO WILL BE REPLACED AND THE SENIOR TWO DEANS OF THE UNIVERSITY WILL SERVE AS RECTOR AND VICE RECTOR.

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3. THE NEW RECTOR, DR. HUGO MANSILLA, 71, HAS TAUGHT OR WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY FOR OVER 30 YEARS, MOST RECENTLY AS DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF CIVIL ENGINEERING. DURING THE 1950'S HE WAS REPORTEDLY ACTIVE IN THE BOLIVIAN COMMUNIST PARTY, BUT THE EMBASSY HAS NO RECORD OF ANY RECENT COMMUNIST ACTIVITY ON HIS PART. HE HAS SERVED AS VICE RECTOR AND BEEN AN UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE FOR ELECTION AS RECTOR.

4. COMMENT: GOB WAS FORCED TO ACCEDE TO STUDENT DEMANDS FOR REPLACEMENT OF SAHONERO AND THE OTHER APPOINTED OFFICIALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OR FACE A REPEAT OF THE APRIL 27 STUDENT TAKEOVER WHEN THE UNIVERSITY FINALLY REOPENED. WITH THE SATISFACTION OF THE STUDENT RADICALS' PRINCIPAL DEMAND MOST OBSERVERS EXPECT THE UNIVERSITY TO REMAIN RELATIVELY QUIET THROUGH THE JULY 9 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: UNIVERSITIES, OPENING OF OFFICES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LAPAZ04273
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780233-0155
Format: TEL
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197806103/aaaadkqc.tel
Line Count: 78
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d429777c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 LA PAZ 3416, 78 LA PAZ 3600
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2147273
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LA PAZ UNIVERSITY REOPENS, BIDS SAYONARA TO SAHONERO
TAGS: PINT, SEDU, BL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d429777c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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EO Systematic Review
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Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014